

## Historic Tour, Astoria.

### SIDE "A"

Welcome to Astoria and a short introduction before you set out on your historic tour of the oldest American-established city on the Pacific coast. Although early Spanish and British explorers sailed the Oregon and Washington coastline hoping to discover a river entrance to the fabled Northwest Passage, none dared challenge the voracious mouth of the northwest's mightiest river. That honor awaited until 1792, when Captain Robert Gray, of Boston, safely crossed the treacherous bar, anchored and named the river after his American ship, the COLUMBIA. Gray's momentous discovery of this vast waterway and its enormous potential was ignored by a young, struggling United States until the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1805-6 returned to President Jefferson with glowing reports of this new American frontier. John Jacob Astor, a New York fur dealer, was quick to act upon Lewis and Clark's information. He organized an expedition to establish a fur trading outpost in the virgin territory and dispatched two groups, one by land and the other by sea, via his ship, the TONQUIN. The TONQUIN group arrived in March of 1811 and the company men immediately set about building "Fort Astoria" in preparation for the land group's arrival. The TONQUIN became a

martyr to the days of exploration when she proceeded north and disappeared forever, having fallen prey to the fierce tribes of Vancouver Island. The remains of the blown-up TONQUIN and her slaughtered crew have yet to be found.

Astor's overland party suffered hardships, too. Several lives were lost before the group arrived in the winter of 1811. After this onimous start, things looked better in Astoria, but only for a short time, for the War of 1812 was about to erupt. At the onset of hostilities, Astor's own lieutenant sold Fort Astoria to the British. It remained a British possession until 1818, at which time the American flag was raised to fly alongside the Union Jack. For the next twenty-eight years, Great Britian and the United States ruled by joint occupancy. In 1846, England begrudgingly relinquished her claim. From that time on, Astoria was exclusively American.

Known today as the "Gateway to the Inland Empire", Astoria plays yearly host to some two thousand merchant ships enroute to or from the great, golden wheatfields throughout the Columbia Basin, the breadbasket of the world.

Your historic tour of Astoria begins and ends at the world-famous Columbia River Maritime Museum, located at 1792 Marine Drive. Once there, please

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begin your tour by proceeding along Marine Drive in an easterly direction. To your left is a fine view of the mighty Columbia and you will no doubt see a number of merchantmen anchored here. The road and land you are now crossing was once known as "Scow Bay". Its waters reached back to the hills immediately behind the Columbia Memorial Hospital to the right. The entire area was gradually filled in with dirt dredged from the river channel. On your left is the Burlington Northern Railroad Station. The first train arrived from Portland in 1898 and commenced its daily round trips from Astoria to Hammond, Warrenton and Seaside.

The advent of the railroad and its direct connection to Portland signaled the beginning-of-the-end for the numerous daily river boats that transported passengers between the two towns. The railroad was a far cry from the wagon trains of the 1840's filled with immigrants fleeing the crowded eastern seaboard. These hardy pioneers endured incredible hardships as they plodded westward in search of free land along Oregon's vast and lush frontier. Each hardy soul firmly believed that eventually America, rather than England, would claim the wilderness territory. Some of the argonauts settled in the fertile Willamette Valley, others pushed ever onward to challenge the extreme limits of the



continent.

J. M. Shively arrived in Astoria in 1843. He established Shively's Astoria, which is now the center of town. Colonel John McClure followed soon after and settled to the west in McClure's Astoria. A. E. Wilson claimed the eastern portion. These three  
 1.45 men and a fur trader named James Birnie, under the employ of the Hudson Bay Fur Company, were the only white inhabitants in Astoria in 1844.

Ahead of you and on the left is a three storey, red-brick building. It was built as a brewery in

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1896 and operated until prohibition closed its doors in 1919. It remained vacant until 1929, at which time it was converted into Fire House #2. It is now used for storage. The new Fire and Police Station is immediately around the corner.

By 1844, Astoria, the fur-trading post, ceased to exist; Astoria, the town, began to emerge. Captains White and Hustler arrived in 1849 in their pilot boat, the Mary Taylor. These experienced, eastern seamen headquartered in Astoria and began the business of guiding ships over the Columbia bar. This, of course, quickened the pace of commercial shipping and that, in turn, created the need for a Custom House. Colonel John Adair was appointed to be its first agent. He arrived in 1849 and immediately set out to purchase a building site in the center of

town. Property owners not only refused to donate land, but demanded prices far beyond Adair's limited funds. As a result, Astoria's first United States Customhouse was established in Upper Astoria, the area you are now approaching. The site of Colonel .45 Adair's customhouse marked the beginning of a bitter rivalry between Upper and Lower Astoria. Tempers flared until the two towns were joined by a road in 1878 and Adairville, or Upper Town, eventually was annexed to Astoria.

To your left is the east mooring basin and several old, redwood cannery buildings. The pilings jutting from the riverbed at one time supported numerous salmon canneries. Thirty-six dotted the shores in the 1880's. During that time, the canneries daily dumped as many as five hundred surplus salmon into .30 the mud flats. Their stench attracted numerous forms of wildlife. Bears trudging down from the hills to feast on the rotting carcasses became a common sight. The dire affects of over-fishing worried a number of early cannerymen, but their warnings fell upon deaf ears. Even today, the problem has not been successfully resolved.

You are now approaching 37th and Marine, also called Leif Erickson Drive. Jeff's Drive-In is on the corner. Please turn right to begin the residential portion of your tour. Along the route, you will see

a unique combination of New England, Cape Cod,  
105 Monterey, Dutch and, in short, every style of  
old and new architecture found in the United States,  
though Astoria is noted for its predominately  
Victorian setting.

Turn right onto Duane. On your left is the  
beautiful Benjamin Young home at 3652 Duane. You  
will note it is marked with an historical shield,  
as are many of the homes along your tour. By all  
means, stop and read the information, savor the  
substance of this history. Many of Astoria's homes  
have been carefully preserved in their original  
condition, others have been resurrected from  
2.30 slumping heaps and lovingly restored to their  
original splendor. A few noteworthy homes in this  
area are the Trombley house at 3515 Franklin, the  
Victorian Italianate home of Christian Leinenweber  
at 3480 Franklin and the Gus Holmes mansion on the  
northeast corner of 34th and Grand.

Follow your map up the hill to 35th and Irving.

Turn right on Irving. You will be headed in a westerly  
direction. A panoramic view of the river, flanked  
on the far side by the beautiful hills of the State  
of Washington, will be the dominating scene.

The mighty Colulumbia has its beginnings some  
twelve hundred miles to the northeast in the Canadian  
Rockies. It cuts through the Cascades of eastern



Washington, not only growing during its journey, but bringing life along the way to an otherwise barren, energyless desert area. It is joined by the Snake River from Idaho and the Willamette of Oregon to eventually yawn its cavernous mouth into the Pacific Ocean ten miles west of Astoria. Its very size exudes the sense of power and its fresh waters have played host to hundreds of thousands of ships. Countless millions of board feet of lumber bound for all points of the compass have traversed its liquid highway. Oregon's wood products are famous the world over.

Astoria struggled through some tough times during her birth. Judge Strong passed through here in 1850 and said,

When Astoria was pointed out as we reached the point below, I confess to a feeling of disappointment. Astoria, the oldest and most famous town in Oregon! We had expected to find a larger place. We saw before us a straggling hamlet, consisting of a dozen or so of small houses irregularly planted along the river bank shut in by the dense forest. We became reconciled and indeed somewhat elated in our feeling when we visited the shore and by its enterprising proprietors were shown the beauties of

the place. There were avenues and streets, squares and public parks, wharves and warehouses, churches and theaters and, an immense population...all on paper! There was not a population in both upper and lower town, in excess of twenty-five men.

In spite of Judge Strong's comments, Astoria managed to grow. For awhile, the army stationed their troops here. By 1860, the troops had left, but Astoria's population now totaled two hundred and fifty. The citizens derived their main source of income from timbering, shipping and fishing, just as they do today. These hardy settlers established a brisk business in exporting smoked and salted fish to the Sandwich Islands.

Astoria was the site of the first post office west of the Rocky mountains. It was started by J. M. Shively and originally located at 15th and Exchange. As the distributing house for all mail to the northwest, which included Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana, it immediately became the most important building in Astoria. When Shively left to try his luck in the California gold fields, David Ingalls took over as postmaster and moved the facility to his store at 10th and Duane. In 1853, San Francisco became the central distributing point and Astoria appointed T. P. Powers in Ingalls'



place. Once again, bitter rivalry raised its ugly head between Upper and Lower Astoria. Powers lived in Upper Town and promptly moved his post office there, next to the customhouse at 34th and Marine. Astoria proper was left without a federal office and, much worse, the move attracted customers to Adairville, Astoria's neighbor and hated antagonist! The bitterness continued until 1861. The advent of the Civil War and a change of administration brought in new officers friendly to Lower Town. They ordered the customhouse and the post office moved back into Astoria proper.

You will notice small directional signs, white on blue, indicating the scenic route. There should be one now, just to your right at 17th and Irving.

Turn right, go down the hill one block and turn left at Grand. There are a number of outstanding homes in this block that can be best appreciated on foot.

If possible, please park your car, turn off the cassette and enjoy a leisurely stroll.

Please turn left at 16th and Grand. You are now on your way to the famed Astoria Column atop Coxcomb Hill. Enroute, you will see Clatsop Community College on your left. Turn right at this intersection and follow the directional signs.

The annual rainfall in Astoria is over sixty-six inches per year and, as you will note while winding along Coxcomb Avenue to the top of the hill, this

qualifies the area as a rain forest. Our coniferous habitat is typical of the Pacific northwest coastal regions. The crowns of these broad-based, pristine evergreens commonly touch to create a giant canopy over the forest floor some two hundred feet below. There, only shade tolerant plants can survive. Wherever a forest giant falls, a variety of sun-loving shrubs and smaller trees fight to gain control of the forest, only to die away in the shadow of a new, growing conifer. Along the road you will see the magnificent Sitka Spruce, Douglas Fir, Western Hemlock, Giant Cedar and Red Alder. On the forest floor, sword ferns and small herbs crowd amongst azalea, rhododendron, cascara and oregon grape. Animal life, too, thrives here. You may spot the huge, five hundred to nine hundred pound Roosevelt elk or the smaller black or white-tailed deer. Raccoon, bob cat and fox are common sights. Bear sightings in the area are extremely rare. Weasels, minks and skunks are as numerous as the rabbits, squirrels and chipmunks. Beaver and muskrat are found in the tributaries and swamp areas below you. You are driving through an area known as the "South Slope". Spring arrives early here. Flowers and shrubs bloom three to six weeks before those on the north slope, only a few hundred yards away.

The Astoria Column, towering high above the

city and the Columbia River estuary, is a popular stop for northwest visitors. Every year, people wind their way through this scenic area to study the historical scroll on the column walls and to enjoy the breath-taking view. The Column was built in 1926, measures one hundred and twenty-five feet from top to bottom and stands six hundred and thirty-five feet above sea level on the peak of Coxcomb Hill. The Great Northern Railroad principally financed the tower, with additional funds contributed by Vincent Astor, an American descendent of John Jacob Astor, who founded the Fort Astoria fur-trading post in 1811. Electus D. Kitchfield, a prominent New York architect, designed the Astoria Column. He drew his inspiration from a triumphal column erected centuries ago by the Emperor Trajan. The spiral murals on the exterior, know as graffitto work, are the artistry of Attilio Pusteria of New York. The scenes portray many notable events in northwest history that took place within sight of the column, such as the discovery of the Columbia River by Captain Robert Gray in 1792, the arrival of Lewis and Clark in 1805 and the founding of Astoria in 1811. The City of Astoria installed a park around the base of the column and cleared away some of the surrounding forest to provide an excellent vista for those visitors unable to climb the one hundred and sixty-



six circular steps to the top of the tower. In recent years, the column has been illuminated at night, making it a visible landmark to the surrounding countryside and even to ships fifteen miles at sea. Looking down from the top of Coxcomb Hill, you will see the broad Columbia River estuary to the north and the smaller, though important, Young's River Bay. If one excludes the ocean and bays, there are relatively few species of fish in this region, but the streams of the coast are noted for their sport fishing. Most anglers seek the salmon and steelhead, 4.10 which abound in the larger rivers. Others prefer the challenge of the cutthroat trout in the smaller coastal streams. Large numbers of salmon and steelhead return each year to the Columbia and its tributaries, where the salmon spawn and die, if not first caught by the fisherman. The steelhead spawn and return downstream. Our most important local fish is the King Salmon, or Chinook, with a five year life cycle. The Silver or Coho salmon, the steelhead, rainbow trout and the fighting cutthroat are prized sport fish and considered gourmet eating. Please turn off the cassette until you are ready to proceed with the rest of the tour.

By 1870, Astoria boasted a population of six hundred and thirty-nine. Small sailing vessels and steamboats plied between Astoria and the lower river

points, while a regular steamer service worked the route between Portland, Astoria and San Francisco. During this time, ocean steamers from Portland customarily stopped overnight at Astoria to await the proper morning tide before crossing the bar. By 1877, seven steamers made regular stops and one, the GREAT REPUBLIC, frequently carried up to a thousand passengers. Each time these passenger steamers stopped for a lay-over, the small town of Astoria filled to over-flowing. "Steamer Day" became an important town event.

The first grain ships to take on their entire cargo in Astoria were loaded by R. C. Kinney and Sons in the fall of 1874. The grain fleet consisted of the British ship VERMONT and three others. A newly-formed barge company towed the grain from Willamette Valley and transferred it to Astoria ships, however the experiment ran afoul of stiff up-river competition.

Another industry during this time rose in importance. Captain John Dominis, of the ship OWYHEE, ordered his crew to salt some fifty barrels of salmon for transport to Boston in 1829. There, the enterprising captain sold his fish for ten cents a pound. Other captains followed suit and soon, many ships were sailing from the Columbia with salted salmon as a regular part of their cargo.

Patrick McGowen arrived in Astoria in the 1850's, began paying the Indians ten cents per fish and was quickly established in the fish-packing business. Hodgkins and Sanders, H. N. Rice and Jotham Reed followed McGowan's lead. They salted and packed salmon for export to the Sandwich Islands, where it sold for twelve dollars a barrel. They paid their Indian fishermen an amazing forty dollars a month.

3.30 The method of canning salmon was introduced to the Columbia and proved so successful that, in 1866, four thousand cases were processed for shipment. The following year, the product rose to eighteen thousand and, by 1874, fish canneries and their owners such as Badollet, A. Booth, Devlin & Nygant, R. D. Hume and Marshall Kinney were common, household names.

You should now be approaching the intersection of Coxcomb and 15th. Cross the intersection carefully.

On your left is a pleasant little area known as the Pioneer Cemetary. It was donated to the town in 1865 by James Welch, an early resident, and used until 1900. There are about five hundred graves, though few are marked.

Astoria's population had nearly doubled by 1876. Warehouses, canneries, stores and homes went up at an astounding rate. Townspeople bragged about ten completed structures per day, one for every daily working hour. Two large lumber mills, five canneries



and a tannery gave ample proof of a thriving town. A beef cannery opened with high hopes in 1877, but soon closed, due to high cattle prices. Fish, however, .32 kept the town humming and, during that year, one thousand small fishing boats known as bow-pickers spread their butterfly-like, triangular sails across the river.

Make a left turn on 14th and you will come to the intersection of Niagara. Make another left turn and proceed past the construction in the street and on down the hill. You are now on Williamsport Road.

The first white woman in Astoria made her place in northwest history as an unofficial member of the British war fleet, whose mission was to capture Fort Astoria from the Americans during the War of 1812. Jane Barnes, described as a lively, flaxen-haired, blue-eyed beauty and a former barmaid from Portsmouth, England, was squired in this unlikely adventure by John MacDonald and later by Donald MacTavish. Both men were proprietors of the Northwest Fur Company. Jane daintily stepped from the deck of the privateer ISSAC TODD onto Astoria's shores in the spring of 1814, following her thirteen month, eighteen thousand mile journey around the Horn. Life aboard the ship ISSAC TODD had introduced Jane to all the comforts of elegant society, a far cry from her previous surroundings as a waterfront barmaid. Armed with a

newly-acquired wardrobe that set off her figure to its best advantage, Jane Barnes graciously accepted Astoria's primitive environment and easily adapted to a world dominated by rough frontiersmen. The mere presence of this exquisit young lass electrified fur traders and Indians alike. Alexander Henry, in charge of Fort George (England's new name for Fort Astoria) hadn't seen a white woman in fifteen years and the Indians had never seen one. The entire male population instantly fell madly in love with Miss Jane Barnes.

Casacas, son of Chief Comcomly, became Jane's most ardent suitor. He proposed she act as queen over his other four wives, offered her all the tobacco she desired and granted her total exemption from grubbing for roots or hauling firewood. Jane, who loved to weave wild flowers in her golden hair and model a new dress each day as she strolled the beach, saw no reason to exchange her present exalted station for a dubious throne in a dank, sooty, fishy-smelling bark hut. She promptly rejected the love-sick Indian prince. For some time thereafter, ill-humored Indians threatened the safety of the entire fort.

It was to Alexander Henry that Jane bestowed all her favors. Unfortunately, their blissful union ended abruptly one month later. A boating

mishap on the mighty Columbia claimed the life of Alexander Henry, as well as that of Donald MacTavish, Jane's previous protector.

Following her double bereavement, Jane's happy, laughing charms graced Astoria's shores for only three short months before the world beckoned and

<sup>45</sup> Jane left Astoria aboard the ship COLUMBIA. For good or bad, Jane was Jane and, as the first white woman in Astoria, has managed to add a little spice to the fascinating history of America's first Pacific coast city.

You should now be at the intersection of Williamsport and Highway 202. Please turn right.

As you drive abreast the Young's River, possibly you will see a tug hustling about the huge log rafts preparing them for transport. The commercial export of northwest lumber began on an irregular basis as early as the fur-trading days on the Columbia, for the fur companies recognized the dollar value growing in our dense forests. Hudson's Bay Company built the first lumber mill. Competition soon followed.

<sup>50</sup> Just to your left and about twenty-five yards from shore, lies the remains of the flat-bottomed river steamer PARKER #2. At low tide, her ribs are plainly visible.

The first lumber shipment from Astoria reached



the Hawaiian Islands in 1844. The brig CHENAMUS delivered fifty thousand board feet of spruce, fir and hemlock. The load sold for twenty thousand dollars, no great fortune, but enough to keep Astoria's lumber mill in business. The owners, Albert Wilson, Henry Hunt and Tallmadge Wood, took on James Birnie as a fourth partner in 1845 and upped the mill's capacity to three thousand feet per day. They installed a company store adjacent to the mill for their seventeen white, Indian and Hawaiian employees.

Just ahead, to the left, off shore, you will see a faded, red, tumbled-down shack, which is an abandoned barge. Next to it and more visible at low tide, lie the remains of an abandoned, wooden sailing vessel. The bones of many such relics dot the river's mud flats. Astoria's boatyards were kept busy turning out the popular, six hundred ton coastal schooners which, if they survived the treacherous Columbia River bar crossings, lived long and useful lives. When they were brought home to die, their masters simply beached them here and left them to rot. This area quickly earned the name of "Rotten Row".

California's gold rush of 1849 gave terrific impetus to Astoria's logging industry for a short time but, by 1860, the timber stands along the Columbia lost out to California's rot and fire

resistent redwood forests. The advent of the railroad revived the industry and a new and profitable trade developed with China. It is still going strong today. Ships carried lumber to the far east and returned with Chinese laborers for Oregon's growing cities.

Much of the shoreline you are now passing was devoted to Astoria's early day shipyards. Those rotted pilings jutting from the mud flats supported launching ways. To the left is the original Young's Bay bridge, the first solid connecting link between Clatsop plains and Astoria.

2. Pilings once intended to support a rail system run parallel to the shore. By 1890, the city boasted a population of six thousand, one hundred and eighty-four. The Astoria & South Coast Railroad was established to connect the city of Seaside, the Plains and Astoria. Although the rails were not destined to enter Astoria for several years, their presence profoundly affected real estate prices. By 1889, a real boom was in progress. The trestle immediately along the shore was designed to link Nehalem Valley, Portland and a spur connection to the South Coast rail line which terminated on the far side of Young's Bay. After constructing several miles of trestle down river to Smith's Point, the company went bankrupt, the track was abandoned and Astoria's real estate boom ran out of steam. A number of

short spurs were laid, however, and used to transport logs from the hills. The advent of steam boilers and winches replaced the ox teams and this, combined with the coming of mainline railroads, moved the logging operations away from the river and into the hills.

Looking directly across Young's Bay you will see the entrance to the Lewis and Clark River, where those two, brave explorers established their fort during the winter of 1805/06. Their decision to build their fort on the Astoria side of the Columbia was purely a matter of economics, for the Chinook Indians across the river charged exorbitant prices for their smoked salmon, wapto roots and other foodstuffs. Lewis and Clark found the Clatsop tribe willing to bargain at fair prices. The expedition's one hundred and six day tenure was a cold and miserable experience. Sgt. Gass, a member of the exploration party, dourly stated,

From the 4th of November to March 25th, 1806, there were not more than twelve days in which it did not rain, and, of those, but six were clear.

To your right is Astoria Senior High School. On the left, KAST broadcasting station occupies the former site of an ancient Clatsop Indian village. Should you need the services of a laundromat, one



is available just ahead, on the right, <sup>IN DENVER.</sup> Across

the street, the remains of the luxury river steamer, T J POTTER, are visible during low tide. Her history is available at the Columbia River Maritime Museum. Just ahead is the site of another old business, the Columbia Shipbuilders.

1.28 If you are driving a camper or have a trailer and need a disposal site, bear to the right as you come to the curve at Smith Point. There is a public dumping unit at the grassy area on the side road just past the pump station.

This concludes the first half of your Astoria tour. Please turn the cassette over to the "B" side.  
Thank you.

TOTAL TIME : 26.44 - SIDE "A"

## SIDE "B"

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Upon leaving the disposal station, you will be heading in an easterly direction along Marine Drive.

Almost three thousand people per month poured into Astoria during the boom period between 1870 and '80, about half that number would eventually proceed inland in search of jobs or farms. The remainder found seasonal summer work in Astoria's canneries, logging camps or as fishermen, then returned to California during the winter. The affects of this large, floating population all but destroyed Astoria's moral standards. During these early years, vice and crime turned the city into the most notorious waterfront town of the Pacific coast. In 1877, forty saloons and as many or more houses of ill-repute reaped a rich harvest during the fishing season. At the same time, a more insidious element quickly established themselves in the wide-open town. The word "crimp" was one to be feared in Astoria. The newly-arrived rubes were easy marks, but even permanent citizens were kidnapped and shipped to the far corners of the world. Astoria rivaled San Francisco as the shanghaiing capitol of the world. The town became known as "Little San Francisco",

not for the precipitous hills and streets that bore a resemblance to that city, but for the hundreds of secret trap doors and chutes that captured the unwary. Depending upon an out-bound captain's need for able-bodied seamen, the crimps pocketed between twenty-five and one hundred dollars for shipboard delivery of their trussed-up, drugged or unconscious victim. Few of Astoria's male population were safe; only those familiar with the shanghaiier's devious schemes escaped those secret trap doors. A farm hand or logger, a newly-arrived immigrant or an innocent teenager sent to town for supplies either awoke the following day aboard an out-bound merchantman or found themselves held prisoner in an isolated area deep in the forest. When two strangers approached each other in Astoria, both moved cautiously to the outer limits of the street or walkway. Neither man dared turn his back. Each was prepared to draw a hidden knife or pistol at a moment's notice. The men circled in a grim minuet with their backs to the wall until each felt safe from attack. Then, and only then, would the would-be adversaries continue on their way, each wondering if the other were a shanghaiier and both breathing a sigh of relief that, this time, they had escaped. Legend has it that on at least one occasion an Astoria woman was not to be out-done by her male

counterparts and shanghaied her husband for one hundred dollars. It was two years before her unfortunate mate managed to make it back home. In 1889, George Grannis, preacher at the Methodist Church and amateur boxer, stood in his belfry ringing for evening services when two crimps tried to take him captive. After giving them a sound thrashing for their trouble, the disheveled and bruised preacher mounted his pulpit and delivered a rather inspired evening service. American ship masters and their land-shark confederates engaged in this common form of slavery for fifty years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

1883 was a banner year in another sense, for that was the year of the first of Astoria's two great fires. It started on July 2nd and swept through the entire waterfront. The town's wooden streets built on pilings over the river fed the flames from building to building, destroying several blocks of businesses, wharves, dwellings and saloons before the fire department controlled the conflagration. During the fire, a large quantity of liquor was carried out of the threatened saloons and moved to places of safety, only to be stolen by a group of rough-class citizens and taken to "Swilltown", the area through which you are now driving. Swilltown's all-night binge degenerated into total disorder, fighting and thievery sped throughout Astoria. Businessmen feared further heavy losses and quickly



organized a committee to assist Astoria's hard-pressed police. In retaliation, a group of fishermen threatened to burn the entire town if forced to curb their revelry. The mayor imposed a midnight curfew on all drinking, but ex-policemen Riley and Ginder, who were now saloon keepers, open fired on officers sent to enforce the emergency measure. While the angry citizen's committee gathered their forces, the police crashed the barricaded door. A long rope was brought. At sight of it and its deadly message, Riley and Ginder readily agreed to leave town immediately. The remainder of Swilltown's reprobates were given twenty-four hours to clear out. All but one left Astoria. He was promptly captured, publicly whipped and escorted out of town. The peaceful Chinese citizens of Astoria then moved in and Swilltown was no more.

TURN RIGHT ON 4<sup>th</sup>, GO  
A ONE BLOCK, TURN LEFT.

You are now on Bond Street. Turn right at 7th and left on Commercial. This will put you between the courthouse and the post office. The commercial area of Astoria is best seen on foot. Turn right on 8th Street and proceed uphill. To your right, you will see the Clatsop County Historical Museum on the northwest corner of 8th and Duane. This is the former home of Captain George Flavel, an early bar pilot. The home was donated to the county by his descendents and is an outstanding example of

Victorian grace and charm. It is well worth your  
time to park and tour this elegant mansion, in  
.30 which case, please turn off the cassette and turn  
it on again when you are ready to proceed up the  
hill.

.10 Thank you. At the intersection of 8th and  
Franklin, please turn right. The brown house on the  
corner of 8th and Franklin is the former home of  
Marshall Kinney, owner of numerous canneries from  
California to Alaska and the first man in the industry  
to recognize the need for fishing conservation.  
The salmon industry reached its zenith in 1883. A  
record number of fish were canned at the highest  
price ever paid for the raw material. Fishermen  
and cannery workers alike enjoyed a premium year.  
During this period, six hundred and twenty-nine  
thousand cases of salmon, valued at over three  
million dollars, were packed on the Columbia.  
Only a very few far-sighted men recognized that the  
1883 record catch of forty-two thousand, seven  
hundred and ninety-nine pounds of Chinook salmon  
would never again be attained and that this marked  
the beginning of a serious over-fishing problem.  
Although Washington and Oregon established laws  
in 1877 to control fishing, both states failed  
to provide enforcement personnell. Settlers farming  
near river banks added to the plight of the fish.  
As the land was cleared, large silt deposits contaminated  
the Columbia's spawning grounds.

1.30

At Franklin and 2nd, turn left and then immediately  
turn right on Grand Avenue.

Farming too near the river destroyed all  
natural ground cover. The banks eroded. Water  
temperatures rose and insect food declined. Dams  
and logging operations contributed to the salmon's  
.30 distress. Their runs gradually declined, never again  
would they enter the Columbia in the massive proportions  
of that amazing decade of the 1880's.

To your right, you will see the Astoria bridge...  
the "Bridge to Nowhere". The Astoria bridge extends  
4.1 miles from Astoria across the mouth of the  
Columbia to Point Ellice, Washington. Its construction  
represents an impressive undertaking. The main span  
measures one thousand, two hundred and thirty-two  
feet in length, the longest continuous span in the  
United States and possibly the world. For many  
years, the idea of a bridge across the lower Columbia  
simmered in people's minds and, in 1961, Senator  
Dan Thiel of Astoria successfully crusaded for the  
bridge. A bridge, his critics said, to nowhere.  
The center span rises almost two hundred feet  
above mean low water. The two towers, resting on  
concrete piers, frame a one thousand and seventy  
foot-wide leap over the shipping channel. The  
bridge then descends to twenty-five feet above  
sea level for more than ten thousand feet across  
the sometimes dry Desdemona Sands, then climbs

briefly again for forty-nine feet of verticle clearance over the north ship channel before descending to meet the Washington approach. The toll booth is located on the Oregon side; the toll is one dollar and fifty cents each way. The bridge was designed to withstand wind gusts of one hundred and fifty miles per hour generated by the fierce Pacific storms that occasionally batter our coast. The critics of the "Bridge to Nowhere" wondered out loud who would ever use a bridge from a small town to an empty shore! The answer came quickly... plenty of people! Oregon and Washington projected a yearly figure of two hundred and forty thousand vehicles. That estimate has routinely been surpassed. In 1981, nine hundred and six thousand, seven hundred and fifteen vehicles used the Astoria bridge to cross over the mighty Columbia River.

The bridge, of course, is a far cry from the days of the old ferry boats and even further from those of the Indian canoes. Early white explorers were fascinated by the canoes of the Lower Chinooks as they watched these swift boats glide through surf or current with impunity; they rated the craft as the finest in the world. When models of these fabulous canoes were shipped to the east coast, shipbuilders there immediately adopted their unique hull design. The once popular apple or bluff-bowed



vessels gave way to the now-famous sleek "clipper" bow. By copying the design of the Lower Chinook canoe, Americans were able to build the fastest sailships in the world. The average Chinook canoe was fashioned from a single log about thirty-five feet in length and was capable of carrying up to twelve people. At one time, hundreds of these vessels daily traversed the estuary and traveled far up-river into the Columbia's tributaries. During the milder months, the tribes lived on the river or ocean shores, but when winter approached, they moved inland to the more sheltered areas. Long before the whites arrived, the Lower Chinooks reputation as astute businessmen was well-established. They capitalized upon the curved, white dentalia shells which they farmed from the straits of Juan de Fuca; along with wearing it as a form of decoration, the shells became one of the Chinook's primary medias of exchange. Their slaves, however, represented the maximum unit of value in trade between various other tribes. The Lower Chinooks were said to own more slaves per capita than any other tribe in the region. Social classes played a great role in their villages and the lot of a slave was not a happy one. Although slaves were seldom mistreated, they were denied all rights, were often neglected and sold or traded as pieces of property. Strangely enough, the mark

of a slave was a round, perfectly natural skull, as opposed to the misshapen head of his master. The first year of a free Chinook's life was devoted to the flattening of his skull. The babe was strapped to a specially constructed cradle board that flattened his forehead from the tip of his nose to the center portion of his cranium, the flatter the better. Life was difficult for the tribes in the estuary, where the extraordinary force of the river stretched to a width of six miles and swept between the basalt cliffs to meet the sea. Intense storms were common and the wind churned the water into angry froth. By the time the first explorers and fur traders entered the Columbia and established contact with the Indians, the Lower Chinooks had already reached their zenith after centuries of slow acclimatization. They had learned to build houses that withstood heavy gales. They knew how to navigate the bar and rough water in the estuary in crafts especially designed for that water. Their chief, Concomly, was the whiteman's first bar pilot. The Chinooks knew all the best fishing spots, what type of clothing was best suited to the Pacific Northwest and had learned how to survive through the raw winters in relative comfort. They had adapted well, but even then it was not an easy way of life. Salmon provided the major food for all the tribes along the Columbia.

Thousands of years of experimentation in a river that teemed with life the year 'round developed the Chinooks into expert fishermen. They speared giant sturgeon, raked in tiny smelt, fished for steelhead trout, sockeye, pink coho and chummed for salmon. The large, oily salmon that ran so abundantly in the Columbia from early spring until fall formed the mainstay of their diet and came to bear the name of their tribe, the Chinook.

Lower Chinooks were buried in canoes mounted on scaffolds, such as the one you saw earlier at the Astoria Column. They were laid to rest with various items to make their last journey an easy one. The Lower Chinooks died in great numbers, for these Indians felt the first affects of exposure as civilization arrived at the mouth of the Columbia. None were spared the whiteman's epidemic diseases. The Chinook population in 1780, just prior to white contact, was estimated at about two thousand. That number was cut in half by 1825, a direct result of the small pox epidemic of 1782 to '83. Just as the tribes began to regain their numbers, a great flu epidemic crossed the world from Asia and struck as hard in England as it did along the Columbia. By 1855, only one hundred and seventy-five Chinook Indians populated the hundred-mile area between The Dalles and the coast. James G. Swan, who lived among the tribes for years and considered a great

friend of the Indians, wrote an in-depth study of Indian mores and stated in 1855,

6.30      The race of the Chinooks  
            is nearly run.

His prophesy came true shortly thereafter. Indeed, their race was run and they exist no longer.

You should now be at 8th Street. Turn left here and head down the hill to Irving Avenue where you will turn right.

Astoria's second great fire erupted December 8th, 1922, and put the town on a firm foundation, figuratively speaking, for up until this time, Astoria's wooden sidewalks, streets and buildings had been perched on pilings that extended over the river. Fishing through cracks in the streets was a favorite pastime among Astoria's townfolk. The great fire spread rapidly under the city to destroy a great portion of the downtown area. The city was re-built immediately on dredged material pumped from the riverbed. A few broken walls can still be seen in the business district as a constant reminder of that great holocaust.

Once again, we travel through the older part of town...a town that has had its ups and downs, a town once situated in a wild and isolated forest where the only roads were narrow trails through the dense woods and the river down below. Yet, Astorian's showed another facet of life, that of



gracious living epitomized by elegant homes kept immaculate by numerous servants. Visiting dignitaries frequently commented upon the open hospitality of Astorians. There were dramatic presentations, musicales and balls, livieried carriages, garden parties under twinkling Chinese lanterns. Astorians supported at least twenty churches of different denominations, one of which stood on pilings over the river and was a great favorite with young boys. Once a week, they flocked to Sunday School and had a great time fishing from the church windows!

At least four Oregon governors lived a portion of their lives in Astoria. The Daily Astorian, a highly rated newspaper established in 1873 by DeWitt Clinton Ireland, has continued its publication and rating since that time.

Though Astoria seems to be lacking in ghosts of yore...there being no reports of haunted houses... the town does harbor its mysteries. Just ahead, at the Hiram Brown house at 1337 Franklin Avenue, workmen were busy reconstructing this oldest house in Astoria when they discovered four human skeletons buried in the basement. Investigation revealed the bones were not of Indian origin. Captain Hiram Brown was, of course, above suspicion and, to this day, that 1895 mystery has never been solved. Countless Astoria citizens and ships have sailed over the

3.30

Columbia's bar into that dreaded area known the world over as the "Graveyard of the Pacific", never to be seen again.

17.40 40 hrs →

At 15th and Exchange, a replica of old Fort Astoria has been constructed in almost the exact spot of the original. Astoria, in its early days, was simply a camping grounds for the settlers but, at times, a certain unfriendliness by the Indians, whether real or imagined, prompted the building of a stockade with two blockhouses. The Indians never attacked the outpost but, with the onset of war in 1812 between England and the United States, the shareholders of Astor's fur company promptly sold theirs and John Jacob Astor's shares to the British. In the meantime, England had already dispatched a small armada of warships to capture America's isolated outpost. Bristling with cannon and geared for an all-out battle, the frigate RACCOON raced across the Columbia bar and sped toward the enemy fort. Not a shot was fired for, much to the officer's and crew's dismay, a high-flying Union Jack identified the fort as an English possession. Denied the glory and spoils of war, the RACCOON dropped anchor and Captain Black, frustrated by this peaceful turn-of-events, stepped ashore, broke a bottle of wine across the flagstaff and, in sonorous tones, announced that he had captured Fort Astoria in the name of His Britannic Majesty King George fo England.

Henceforth, the stockade would be known as "Fort George". John Jacob Astor's dream of a fur-trading empire on the west coast came to an end in that year of 1813. He had tried valiantly, though. Born in 1763 in Waldorf, Germany, Astor emigrated to America in 1783. New opportunities in the new world quickly established John Jacob Astor as America's first millionaire. During his entire business career, he lost on only one investment, and that was Astoria. Two supply ships, more than thirty lives and an enormous amount of supplies and furs were forfeited to a lonely little outpost that he had never seen.

Eventually Astoria was returned to the Americans. She proudly stands, bathed in history, known the world over as America's first and oldest west coast possession. In honor of John Jacob Astor, Astoria's sister city is Waldorf, Germany.

At 16th and Exchange stands a magnificent building constructed in 1905 as a City Hall and library. During WW II it served as a USO Center. From 1962 until 1982, it housed a Maritime Museum under the direction of Rolf Klep, a nationally recognized illustrator, historian and native Astorian who, by door-pounding for funds, established the magnificent Columbia River Maritime Museum just ahead of you. Though Rolf did not live to see his dream come true, he died just a year before its opening in 1982, it stands as a memorial to his



and many other hard-working people's beliefs that our wonderful heritage should be preserved. The museum, considered the finest on the west coast and supported totally by private contributions, provides a wealth of information to the historian. Its outstanding marine display is truly stunning. The museum's staff is at all times willing and able to answer your questions. We hope, as you near the end of your historic tour of Astoria and the conclusion of this tape, you will take the time to enter into another world, that of the Columbia River Maritime Museum...it is a trip you will never forget.

Thank you. This ends your Astoria Tour tape. We hope to see you again...real soon.

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